

release and recovery information have been developed, following formats similar to those of the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network's Cooperative Marine Turtle Tagging Program form and Stranding Report form. All information collected will be entered and stored using dBASE III data management software on a personal computer (IBM PCAT compatible). Copies of the release and recovery forms can be requested from the Galveston Laboratory at the address following this announcement.

Upon use of PIT tags, PIT Tag Release Data forms should be completed and sent to the Galveston Laboratory. When a turtle is tagged with a PIT tag, I suggest the implanted tag number (code) be checked with the ID reader and the displayed tag number (code) be recorded. This is a double-check to make sure the tag number (code) recorded for an individual turtle is the one actually implanted into that turtle. Also, record any other tag numbers (codes) from inconel, monel, titanium or plastic flipper tags and record any tag scars or living-tags if present. When a sea turtle is recovered and a PIT tag detected, send the Galveston Laboratory a copy of the PIT Tag Recovery Data form. If information on tagged, released and recovered animals is sent to the Galveston Laboratory on a timely basis, the data will be entered into the computer and kept up to date for availability upon request.

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## SCUTES RESERVED FOR LIVING TAGS: AN UPDATE

Living tags on carapace scutes are being used, in conjunction with metal flipper tags and magnetic binary coded wires tags (Fontaine et al., 1985, NOAA Tech. Memo, NMFS-SEFC-158) to distinguish year-classes of head-started Kemp's ridley sea turtles, Lepidochelys kemp (Caillouet et al., 1986, MTN 36:5-6).

Originally, neural scutes were among those identified as sites for living-tags for head-started Kemp's ridleys of the 1986, 1987, 1991 and 1992 year-classes. However, we encountered a number of difficulties applying the living-tag to neural scute 4 of turtles from the 1986 year-class. The carapace apparently hardens first along the midline or neural ridge, consequently, the living-tag must be applied to neural scutes much sooner during the head-start period than to other carapace scutes. It is extremely difficult to affix the living-tag tissue graft to neural scutes on small juvenile Kemp's ridleys because the scutes are smaller than the other carapace scutes. Also, when neural scutes are soft enough to receive a living-tag, the turtles are too small to be subjected to the rigors of this tagging technique. Living-tagging of the 1986 year-class on neural scute 4 resulted in a relatively high incidence of tag loss (18%) prior to releasing the turtles.

Therefore, we have dropped neural scutes from the list of scutes designated for living-tagging head-started Kemp's ridleys.

The new schedule and locations for living-tags are shown below.

Table 1. Carapacial scutes used or proposed for living-tagging head-started Kemp's ridleys. RC=right costal, LC=left costal, N=neural, LH=left humeral, RH=right humeral, LP=left pectoral, RP=right pectoral, LA=left abdominal.

YEAR	SCUTES	YEAR	SCUTES
1980	LC2, LC3, RC2, RC3, RC4, N2, N3, LH, LP, LA (some individuals were tagged between scutes RC2 and RC3, RC3 and RC4, LP and RP or LH and RH)	1983	LC4
		1984	LC5
		1985	RC5
		1986	N4
		1987	RC1
		1988	LC1
		1989	RC4
1981	None living tagged	1990	RC2
1982	LC31	1991	LC2
		1992	RC3

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## HATCHLING KEMP'S RIDLEY STRANDS AT GALVESTON ISLAND, TEXAS

A live hatchling Kemp's ridley sea turtle (Lepidochelys kemp) was found stranded on the beach by Amanda K. Bollman and Timothy B. Allen of Houston, Texas, on 31 July 1988 near San Luis Pass (Galveston Island, Texas). The turtle was found in sargassum weed in the surf wash line. It weighed 20.3 grams, and measured 5.0 cm straight line carapace length and 4.5 cm straight line carapace width. The hatchling had a small wound between costal scutes 4 and 5 and there was a gooseneck barnacle (Lepas sp.) attached to neural scute 2. A considerable amount of algae was present on the carapace and the turtle appeared to be emaciated.

This hatchling is being rehabilitated by the National Marine Fisheries Service Sea Turtle Head Start Research Project staff in Galveston and is being kept in isolation from other head start animals. The turtle is being fed fresh squid daily to satiation. Attempts are being made to feed it Purina Turtle Chow, although presently the hatchling will not feed on the prepared diet. If this hatchling survives, we plan to tag and release it with the 1988 head start year-class in the spring of 1989.

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